

October 9, 1963

EMPHASIS, 1:30 P.M.

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MORGAN BEATTIE: "In some 40 years on the news front I have been impressed at times with some of our discards in the game of government and world affairs. I have thought, for example, of the late Senator Bob LaFollette, who spent all of his adult years, even more, learning and applying skills in government, only to succumb to the evil of not keeping in touch with the voters back home in Wisconsin. When Joe McCarthy defeated Bob LaFollette for the Senate under the guise of fighting communism, the younger LaFollette was a broken man. At lunch in Washington with me one day, he asked the most difficult question -- he acknowledged that his private legal fees gave him wealth far above any he had known as a government servant, but he said, 'I know government; I know how to serve the people; now I am a discard; what about discards?'

"Within six months, Bob LaFollette was dead by his own hand. He considered himself no longer a valuable member of society. I can name many discards, even former Presidents -- Eisenhower and Truman and General George Marshall, Allen Dulles. Speaking of Mr. Dulles, the former chief of the American cloak and dagger service, the CIA, what about this man John Richardson, who has just been recalled as the CIA man from South Viet Nam?

"As the story goes, CIA man John Richardson is a guerilla servant extraordinary for his country; his anti-Communist work in Greece and the Philippines was outstandingly successful; he helped defeat communist takeovers in both countries after World War II, and, as a Far East hand, John Richardson set up the anti-communist fight in the mountains of Viet Nam. He became personally close to Saigon's cloak and dagger Vietnamese leader, Nhu. Mr. Nhu is President Diem's brother. He adapted his know-how against communists in mountain fighting to the strategic village idea proposed by Nhu. U.S. Special Forces went into the mountains and won over tribesmen; sometimes six American CIA agents ultimately controlled hundreds of square miles and kept those areas out of communist hands. Our military forces gradually took over this activity.

"And Mr. Richardson reverted to becoming a personal pipeline between those in power in Viet Nam and our former Ambassador Nolting. Mr. Richardson, quite naturally -- he's a remarkable diplomat with an engaging personality -- quite naturally became firm friends with Vietnamese high in the councils of the Diem government, and then, late in the game, he discovered that Diem had decided to crack down on the Buddhists, all of them, communist Buddhists and non-communist alike, and so for the moment John Richardson turns out to be a man whose usefulness to a new ambassador naturally is limited.

"John Richardson has been recalled to Washington. Like many another citizen before him, caught in the burning issues of the moment, John Richardson may be seared and thrown into the discard. Let us hope that the powers that be read between the lines, appraise the situation carefully."